

**Congress of the United States
House of Representatives****Committees:**

Government Reform

Education
and the
Workforcewww.house.gov/kucinich**US Congressman Dennis J. Kucinich
United Nations World Summit on Sustainable Development
Parliamentarians for Global Action
Johannesburg, South Africa
Thursday, August 29, 2002****Global Action to Sustain People**

Welcome to all members and friends of Parliamentarians for Global Action as we gather in Johannesburg, South Africa for the World Summit on Sustainable Development. I welcome you as members. I welcome you as my brothers and sisters. We join together today to affirm our essential interconnectedness and to celebrate our humanity by being active participants in the world community. What higher cause or purpose could any of us aspire to than to unite to save the very planet with which billions of people have entrusted us in a special stewardship. It is said that these conferences are just about words. Let us not forget that lofty thoughts and words lead us to the starry paths where human destiny transcends our current condition. Our goals must ever be the qualitative transformation of social and political structures.

As Parliamentarians for Global Action we assert our intention and our ability to make a difference in protecting our global environment through concerted action towards sustainability. We have the distinct privilege to think and act globally. We have the obligation, as elected officials, to act locally to create energy and other systems in harmony with the environment, our neighbors and our globe.

When we speak of sustainability, we speak of support systems which sustain the life of every person living on this planet and of all those who would live on this planet. Often development is at odds with such systems. In our drive to bring the earth to subjection, humanity has separated itself from nature. The disconnect from nature translates for some as economic progress. In this capacity, nature is brought into subjection at all costs. The air, water, biodiversity and humanity itself are made subservient to development. Under such conditions the earth in development achieves a kind of crude transformation.

Our cause is the transformation of the human condition and the triumph of the human spirit: To help our brothers and sisters, to lift their burden, to achieve decent living conditions, clean air, clean water, adequate housing, health care and education to reach the fullness of life. Our cause is human development, which can only succeed when all development is in harmony with the earth and attune to the natural rhythms, which move

the tides, which ride the currents of fresh air, which pulsate in the human heart, which strives for freedom, and expression. Our challenge is to bring economic systems into harmony with humanity, to create a newer world, socially and economically just, where peace and prosperity abound everywhere.

In doing this we affirm the commonwealth of the world. We affirm support for the purpose of the United Nations and its charter, which enables reciprocity among all countries. We affirm the importance of international treaties which are the legal basis for global cooperation. We affirm our interdependence and the dignity of each person on this planet. We affirm that all humans have a right to survive and we make the cause of the survival of this world our cause.

In order to achieve our purpose, we must quicken the evolution of our political structures to enable our economic structures to support our democracies. An evolutionary governance strengthened through transparency will enable us to make each system within which we work rise to the challenges of our times. Such governance will assist the great business machines of our society in following new thinking which assures that profit and sustainability exist simultaneously. Such government epitomizes the promise of the new Partnership for Africa's Development.

For the United States in the 21st Century, this requires affirming principles of sustainability. It requires recognizing and promoting international cooperation and agreements. It requires affirming and ratifying treaties beginning with:

The Kyoto Treaty on Global Climate Change.

The Biodiversity Treaty.

The Forest Protection Treaty.

The Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty.

The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

The Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty.

The Landmine Ban Treaty.

The Biological Weapons Convention.

The Chemical Weapons Convention.

The International Criminal Court.

It will require that our country and all nations review and modify all treaties which reject national sovereignty in the cause of a global corporate ethic which does not respect human rights, workers rights and environmental quality standards. This means reviewing the practices and the practical impact of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank.

It will require challenging those twin quandaries which threaten human life and the planet. Itself, war and global climate, change through ushering it a new era where principles of sustainability and renewal are the basis of every action of each person. To avert war we support existing and new structures for peaceful, nonviolence conflict resolution.

To meet the challenge of global climate change, we support principles and practical initiatives which point the path out of the darkness of air too dangerous to breathe and water too dangerous to drink. This includes, of course, principles of accountability for corporations: That they be subject to the rule of nation law and to the basic requirements of human rights, workers rights and environmental quality principles.

Similarly market economics need to be transformed so as to work in harmony with basic human needs for clean air and clean water. Market-based systems which inevitably exclude the poor have no place in the distribution of water. Water is a human right which must stand above market economics and privatization, just as many are learning of the risks of health care and energy left to the market.

The World Conference on Sustainable Development presents each of us with new opportunities to bring practical measures to advance our noble principles. In the United States I will soon announce legislation to create \$50 billion solar venture fund, in cooperation with the United Nations, to introduce solar technologies to developing nations. Parallel legislation will provide incentives for the production and application of solar technologies in the U.S.

As Parliamentarians for Global Action we stand at the threshold of a new world. We understand how profoundly creative is this moment. We know that we have the willingness, the heart and the spirit to join in the great cause of saving the world. Let us move forward with great joy, celebrating our brotherhood and sisterhood and the inevitable triumph of truth and justice which occurs whenever people of good will gather together in support of our beautiful planet.